

## **Medicare Rx Update: June 20, 2006**

### **Information for Pharmacists Calling Medicare ...**

As you know, the special contact phone line for pharmacists (1-866-835-7595) will no longer be available after June 23. CMS originally created the pharmacist contact line at the startup of the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit...when data was less likely to reflect accurate beneficiary information and Plans were experiencing high call volumes. Since January, the average wait time on Plan customer service numbers has decreased dramatically and the number of daily calls to the CMS pharmacist contact line has decreased by more than 80%.

Beginning on June 24, pharmacists who call 1-866-835-7595 will be redirected to the 1-800 Medicare interactive voice response system...where they will have access to the same information and service as they do today. Callers to 1-800-Medicare reach a Call Service Representative (CSR) with little or no wait times.

Medicare Part D Plans should continue to be the first pharmacy contact for nearly all questions...including formulary and cost sharing issues, payment inquiries and other contracting questions. If the pharmacist does not receive appropriate information from the Plan, or would like to file a complaint, they should contact 1-800-Medicare or their CMS Regional Office. Additionally, pharmacists should continue to call 1-800-Medicare (1-800-633-4227) to determine Medicare eligibility or to obtain enrollment information if it cannot be obtained from the patient or through the E1 query.

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